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ABSTRACT

The development and validation of a brief scale of parental modernity in child rearing and educational attitudes and beliefs are reported. Three samples (A, B and C) of mothers and their children varying in number, race, socioeconomic status (SES), risk for educational failure, and, in one sample, age participated in the study. Various measures, including the Parent as Educator Interview, the Classroom Behavior Inventory (CBI) and subtests of the Test of Basic Experience (TOBE), the Weschler Preschool Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI), and the Peabody Individual Achievement Test (PIAT), were employed. Scales to measure modernity in child rearing and educational attitudes and belief were developed independently for samples A and B from scales of the Parent as Educator Interview. Several data analyses were conducted, including internal consistency and test-retest reliability estimates, a test of the relationship of scale results to parent SES (separately for white and black subjects), cross-sectional validity tests, and a test of the hypothesis that parent modernity competence than with their social and emotional adjustment. The scales were found to be highly reliable and findings showed significant positive correlations of education and income with parental modernity. Cross-validation data suggest that parental modernity is substantially and positively correlated with child intelligence. Correlations of A and B modernity scale scores for sample C subjects were significantly positive with several CBI academic competence scales, significantly negative with CBI dependency and distractibility scales, and insignificant for several CBI social and emotional behaviors. (The parent form of the modernity scale, titled the Child-rearing and Education Research Instrument, and a scoring form are appended.) (Author/RH)

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Parental Modernity in Childrearing and Educational Attitudes and Beliefs

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Parental Modernity in Childrearing and Educational Attitudes and Beliefs

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The high levels of academic competence required for achievement in the emerging post-industrial information society (Bell, 1973), the economic significance of investments in human capital (Schultz, 1961), societal goals of "equality of educational opportunity" (Coleman, 1966), and evidence of the major role of family environment in the development of academic competence provide a rationale for research on parental correlates of intellectual development. Parent education and occupation have substantial correlations with child intellectual development and with parent attitudes (Becker & Krug, 1964) and values for children (Kohn, 1969). Inkeles and Smith's (1974) concept of individual modernity, partially defined by attitudes and beliefs, motivated work on a scale of modernity in childrearing and educational attitudes and beliefs. The hypothesis that parental modernity is an intervening variable between parent education and occupation and the intellectual development of the child has been supported by an earlier finding that parent sociodemographic variables did not add to a prediction of child reading achievement derived from parent attitudes, beliefs, values and behavior (Schaefer & Edgerton, 1979).

The conceptual and research basis for development of a scale of parental modernity in childrearing and educational beliefs and attitudes includes Schaefer and Bell's (1958) conceptualization of democratic and authoritarian attitudes toward childrearing, Brown's (1968) synthesis of Dewey's writings on progressive and traditional educational beliefs, and Kohn's (1969) work on self-directing versus conforming values for children. Further analyses of those concepts in a Parent as Educator

Interview (Schaefer & Edgerton, 1977) that includes measures of parent attitudes and beliefs as well as values and behaviors provides a basis for development and validation of a brief scale of Modernity in Childrearing and Educational Attitudes and Beliefs.

Method

Subjects. Sample A consisted of 98 black and 77 white mothers and children randomly selected from 28 kindergarten classrooms in 8 rural, suburban, and urban schools. Sample B consisted of 55 black, low socio-economic status mothers and their children who had been selected during infancy as at high risk for later school failure and 33 white mothers and children randomly selected from the same classrooms from a predominantly higher SES community. Sample C included 40 white and 9 black normal older school age siblings of a sample of young normal and handicapped children and their mothers and fathers.

Data Collection

A Parent as Educator Interview (Schaefer & Edgerton, 1977) of which the initial version included 30 scales defined by 99 items of child-rearing and educational attitudes was administered during the Fall and Spring of the kindergarten year to mothers of Sample A, and during the kingergarten year to mothers of Sample B. Mothers and fathers of Sample C responded to a self-administered inventory version of the Parent as Educator Interview. Teacher ratings of the child's verbal intelligence, task-orientation, independence, curiosity/creativity, considerateness and extroversion were collected with the Classroom Behavior Inventory (Schaefer & Edgerton, 1978), for each of the three samples. Subtests of the TOBE and WPPSI were collected on Sample A, and WPPSI and PIAT data were collected on Sample B.

Data Analyses

Modernity in Childrearing and Educational Attitudes and Belief scales were developed independently for Samples A and B from scales of the Parent as Educator Interview. Criteria for item selection were significant correlations of individual items with teacher ratings of verbal intelligence and with mental test scores.

Reliability estimates were computed for the larger and more representative Sample A. Equivalence of Scales A and B that were developed from item analyses of Samples A and B was determined by intercorrelating scores for Scales A and B. Internal consistency reliability was computed from Cronback's alpha and split half reliability was computed by correlating scores for items that were judged to be more relevant for parents with a score for items that might also be used with teachers and nonparents. Test-retest reliability was computed by correlating total scale scores for the fall interview with total scores for the spring interview.

The hypothesis that modern attitudes toward childrearing and education are correlated with parent socioeconomic status was tested in Sample A by correlating mothers' modernity scale scores with mothers' education and income for the entire sample and separately for white and black subjects.

Cross-sectional validities of Modernity Scales A and B in predicting intelligence ratings by teachers were computed for the samples on which they were developed. Since this procedure often produces inflated estimates of validity, the scale developed on Sample A was cross-validated on Sample B and vice versa. A combined scale AB (Appendix) that was developed from items contained in Scales A and B was cross-validated for Sample C. Separate validities were computed for total groups and

and for white and black subjects in Samples A and B and for mothers and fathers in Sample C. To test the hypothesis, derived from other studies of parent attitudes, that parent modernity is more highly correlated with academic competence than with social and emotional adjustment, mother and father modernity scale scores of Sample C were correlated with each of the teacher rating scales of the Classroom Behavior Inventory.

Results

Estimates of reliability for Sample A are reported in Table 1. Internal consistency reliability computed with Cronbach's alpha is .88, split half reliability with the Spearman-Brown correction computed by correlation of the parent form with the general form is .90, the alternative form reliability determined by correlating scores derived from Scale A and Scale B is .91, and the test-retest reliability derived from correlations of scores for Fall and for Spring is .84. The test-retest reliability of .84 for independent interviews in fall and spring of the kindergarten year is consistent with Spearman-Brown corrected split half reliability .90. Correlations of modernity Scale A with mothers' education and income for the total Sample A and for separate black and white samples are reported in Table 2. The findings, that are supported by unreported analyses of Samples B and C, show significant correlations of education and income with parental modernity.

The initial correlations of modernity scales with teacher ratings of the child's verbal intelligence from the Classroom Behavior Inventory for modernity Scales A and B for the samples from which the scales were derived are reported in Table 3. The findings are cross-validated for Samples A, B, and C for scales that were developed independently of the sample in which they are cross-validated. All correlations are significant for total samples, for separate black and white samples,

and for mothers and fathers. Although the correlations are lower for more homogeneous white and black samples, the cross-validation data suggest that parental modernity is substantially correlated with child intelligence. Unreported correlations of the modernity scales with mental test scores for Samples A and B strongly support that finding.

Correlations of Modernity Scale A and B scores for mothers and father in Sample C with all of the scales of the Classroom Behavior Inventory are reported in Table 4. The significant positive correlations are with academic competence scales of Verbal Intelligence, Curiosity/ Creativity, Independence and Task-Orientation and the significant negative correlations are with Dependency and Distractibility. The social and emotional behaviors of Extraversion. Introversion, Considerateness and Hostility have insignificant correlations with modernity scores.

Discussion

A parental modernity in childrearing and educational attitudes and beliefs scale has high internal consistency and test-retest reliabilities. Correlations of parent education with parental modernity in childrearing and educational attitudes and beliefs that are similar to correlations of parent education with individual modernity (Inkeles & Smith, 1974), and with parent values for children (Kohn, 1969) in studies of different social groups and in different countries support the concept of modernity in childrearing and education. Although early work on parent attitudes was motivated by a goal of predicting the child's social and emotional development (Schaefer & Bell 1958), substantial cross-validated correlations with ratings of academic competence and with mental test scores and insignificant correlations with ratings of social and emotional behavior suggest that parental modernity in childrearing is an index of a childrearing environment that contributes to academic competence

rather than to social adjustment. The conceptual model of the Figure that includes parental socioeconomic status, parent individual modernity, and parental modernity in childrearing as predictors of child academic competence is supported by this study and by previous research.

A hypothesis that parent childrearing attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors may be intervening variables between parent social and cultural characteristics and child development is supported by Vygotsky's (1978, p. 56-57) theory of the internalization of higher psychological processes of attention and thinking. Vygotsky suggests that the process of internalization consists of a series of transformations during which interpersonal processes are transformed into intrapersonal processes as a result of a long series of developmental events. An integration of evidence for the need for early and continuing education in the home (Schaefer, 1970) suggested the concept of Ur-Education to describe the most primitive, basic educational interactions with a parent. Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the transformation of interpersonal processes to intrapersonal processes and an analysis of the process of Ur-Education provide a theoretical basis for empirical findings that parent attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors contribute to the development of higher psychological processes that are correlated with academic and occupational achievement. Researches that find that changes in values and attitudes may contribute to changes in behavior suggest that early interventions might be designed to change parent attitudes, beliefs and values as well as behavior (Krietler & Krietler, 1976; Rokeach, 1971).

This development and validation of measures of parental modernity in childrearing and education may contribute to development of more comprehensive goals and evaluations of early intervention and to investments

in human capital through strengthening and supporting parental care and education of the child. Evidence of the long-term effects of early intervention (Lazar & Darlington, 1978), uncertainity about the processes that contribute to long-term effectiveness, and uncertainity about the relative effectiveness of child-centered and parent-centered interventions suggests the need for research on the long-term effects of different interventions upon parent attitudes, beliefs, values and behavior as well as upon the academic competence of the child.

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Table 1

Reliabilities of Modernity Scale for

Mothers of Kindergarten Children (Sample A)

N=193

Type of Reliability Estimate	Reliability
Split Half (Parent and General Form)	.90
Internal Consistency	.88
Alternative Forms (Scales A and B)	.91
Test-Retest (Fall and Spring)	.84

Table 2

Correlation of Mother's Education and Income with Modernity Scale for Mothers of Kindergarten Children (Sample A)

Parent Variable	Total Sample N=185	White Sample N=82	Black Sample N=103
Mothers Education	.54	.70	.48
Family Income	.53	.47	.47

Note: Significance of all correlations <.001

Table 3

Correlations of Modernity Scales with Teacher Ratings

of Child Intelligence

	Sample A Mothers			Sample B Mothers			Sample C	
							Mothers	Fathers
Modernity Scale	Total N= 175	White N= 77	Black N= 98	Total N= 88	White N= 33	Black N= 55	N= 49	N= 49
Initial Correlation:								
A	.55**	.48**	.40**					
B				.72**	.54**	.51**		
Cross-Validation:								
A				.72**	.55**	.52**		
B	.44**	.34**	.29*					
AB							.50**	.51**

* $p < .01$

** $p < .001$

Table 4

Correlations of Modernity Scale AB with Teacher Ratings of Normal School Children (Sample C)

N=49

Rating	Modernity of Father	Modernity of Mother
Extroversion	16	11
Curiosity/Creativity	47***	37**
Verbal Intelligence	51***	50***
Independence	44**	41**
Task-Orientation	40**	32*
Considerateness	04	07
Introversion	-08	-04
Apathy	-28	-24
Dependency	-48***	-38**
Distractibility	-45**	-32*
Hostility	-25	-17

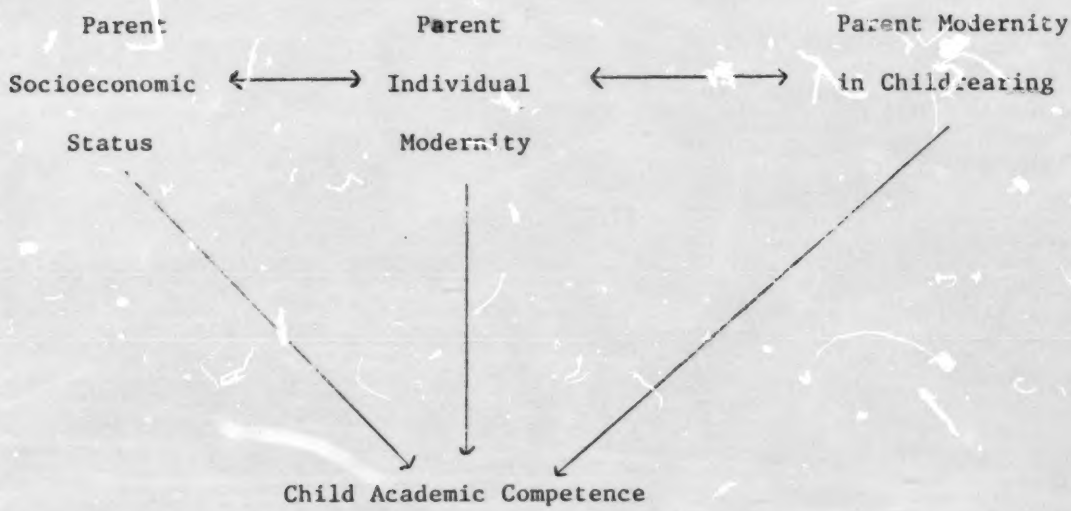
* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Figure

A model for parent socio-economic status, individual modernity, and modernity in childrearing as predictors of child academic competence



Child-rearing and Education Research Instrument

General Form

Earl S. Schaefer and Marianna Edgerton

September 1980

Please circle the number which indicates how much you agree or disagree with the following statements on childrearing and education.

	Strongly Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Not Sure	Mildly Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Since parents lack special training in education, they should not question the teacher's teaching methods	1	2	3	4	5
2. Children should be treated the same regardless of differences among them.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Children should always obey the teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Preparing for the future is more important for a child than enjoying today.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Children will not do the right thing unless they must.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Children should be allowed to disagree with their parents if they feel their own ideas are better.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Children should be kept busy with work and study at home and at school.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The major goal of education is to put basic information into the minds of the children.	1	2	3	4	5
9. In order to be fair, a teacher must treat all children alike.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to whoever is in authority.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Children learn best by doing things themselves rather than listening to others.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Children must be carefully trained early in life or their natural impulses will make them unmanageable.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Children have a right to their own point of view and should be allowed to express it.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Children's learning results mainly from being presented basic information again and again.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Children like to teach other children.	1	2	3	4	5

Child-rearing and Education Research Instrument

Parent Form

Earl S. Schaefer and Marianna Edgerton

September 1980

Please circle the number which indicates how much you agree or disagree with the following statements on childrearing and education.

	Strongly Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Not Sure	Mildly Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to parents.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Now that my child is in school, the school has the main responsibility for his/her education.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Children generally do not do what they should unless someone sees to it.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I teach my child that he/she should be doing something useful at all times.	1	2	3	4	5
5. It's all right for my child to disagree with me.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Children should always obey their parents.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Teachers need not be concerned with what goes on in a child's home.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I go along with the game when my child is pretending something.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Parents should teach their children to have unquestioning loyalty to them.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Teachers should discipline all the children the same.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Children should not question the authority of their parents.	1	2	3	4	5
12. What I teach my child at home is very important to his/her school success.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Children will be bad unless they are taught what is right.	1	2	3	4	5
14. A child's ideas should be seriously considered in making family decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
15. A teacher has no right to seek information about a child's home background.	1	2	3	4	5

Child-rearing and Education Research Instrument
1980

Scoring Form

Parent Form

Positive items	5, 8, 12, 14
Negative items	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15

General Form

Positive Items	6, 11, 13, 15
Negative Items	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14

To get score for modernity in child-rearing and educational attitudes, add scores for all positive items, subtract scores for all negative items. To eliminate possibility of negative total, add 52 to each score. Possible range = 1 to 61 on each of the two forms.